The 42nd Regiment, Virginia Volunteers, 1861-1865

By Frank R. Levstik

The passage on April 17, 1861, of William Ballard Preston's secession ordinance made Virginia the eighth state to secede and added her numbers to the Confederate cause. The secession ordinance passed by a vote of 88 to 55, but numbered among the nays could be found the vote of Peyton Gravely of Henry County, a future company commander in the 42nd Virginia Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Gravely's vote is not easily explained; for, according to Henry T. Shanks, "the neighboring counties supported secession" and "it is doubtful that the delegates represented the sentiments of their constituents."[1] Perhaps Gravely's vote was an affirmation of the election results of 1860. In Henry County, Constitutional Union Party candidate John Bell received 544 votes as compared to John Breckinridge's 445 and Stephen Douglas's 60.[2] Nevertheless, Gravely did cast a negative vote, although he later signed the secession ordinance.

Preparation for war moved apace and orders were sent throughout the state for the organization of military units. The southwestern counties such as Floyd, Henry, and Patrick responded to the call to arms. On April 26, Lt. Col. Daniel Allen Langhorne, VMI graduate and physician from Lynchburg, received orders to take command of the Lynchburg district. His orders were to arrange food and shelter for thirteen regiments of troops.[3]

Shortly after Virginia's secession, organization of the 42nd Virginia began. The Regiment consisted of ten companies, mustered from the residents of seven counties south and southwest of Lynchburg. Companies A, F, and G came from Henry County, B from Floyd, C from Bedford, D and I from Campbell, E from Roanoke, H from Patrick, and K from Franklin.[4]

One of the earliest units to organize was Capt. Samuel J. Mullins's Co. A from Henry County. Confirmation of Fort Sumter's fall prompted the organization of the company. Writing in his diary on April 27, Capt. Mullins remarked: "This morning I left early for Ridgeway to the raising of a flag. We raised two flags. There was several speeches made. I made one and was vociferously cheered and many shed tears. We got twenty-five volunteers."[5]

On May 2, the company met to elect officers. Samuel J. Mullins was chosen captain, with Jesse M. Richardson and John W. Critz se-

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[1] Henry T. Shanks, *The Secession Movement in Virginia 1847-1861* (Richmond, 1934), 305.

[2] *Richmond Whig and Public Advertiser*, Nov. 13, 1860.

[3] U. S. War Department (comp.), *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. II, 781. Hereafter cited as *O.R.*; unless otherwise stated, all references will be to Ser. I.

[4] Lee A. Wallace, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations 1861-1865* (Richmond, 1964), 164-65.

[5] Diary of Samuel J. Mullins, Apr. 27, 1861, typescript in possession of Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., Blacksburg, Virginia. Hereafter cited as Mullins Diary.

lected lieutenants. Four days later, the trio left by rail for Richmond. While in the capital, the men called on Governor John Letcher, who presented them with official commissions. The officers spent the next three days observing the martial activity at the Hermitage Fair Grounds in Richmond before returning to Henry County. Captain Mullins then continued his recruiting activities, which culminated on June 12 in the transport of ninety men by rail to Lynchburg.[6]

Joining Co. A from Henry County was Co. F, led by Capt. Josiah Hereford. Assisting the captain were Lieutenants Christopher Wingfield and Peyton Gravely. The final unit from Henry County, Co. G., found leadership in a physician, William W. Morris. His aides for the war were George Mills and John C. Forbes.

Andrew Jackson Deyerle's Co. E from Roanoke County, organized near Salem and took the name of "Dixie Grays". According to Pvt. George P. Airhart, nearly 100 members were at the June, 1861, organization.[7]

Near the end of June, Co. I, known as the "Campbell Guards", organized near Concord Depot along the Appomattox and Campbell County line. The volunteers came from Concord and the adjacent areas of Spring Mill, Sherwill, Hat Creek, and Bethany in Campbell County. A few volunteers came from the Stonewall and Spout Springs area in Appomattox County. Organized and commanded by Capt. William Bayliss Rector, a prewar attorney, the company had an original strength of eighty-four men. Rector's fellow officers included the Arrington brothers, John and Albert, plus Henry D. Puckett. Orderly sergeant was Robert W. Withers.[8]

Company C, from Bedford County, was mustered into service in early June at Bedford Depot. The company traveled to Buchanan to meet an expected Federal attack and remained there until June 21, when it left for Lynchburg via the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. John Buford commanded the unit, with William D. Williams as principal lieutenant.[9]

On July 1, Capt. John E. Penn's Co. H from Patrick County left Perris Store for Lynchburg. This unit's command resembled a family council, for Capt. Penn's brothers, Greenville and E. L., served as junior officers.[10]

Franklin County sent Co. K, named the "Franklin Invincibles," to Lynchburg. Leading this contingent were Capt. Samuel Hale, Jr., and Lts. James W. Helm and Samuel H. Saunders.

On May 31, Campbell County sent another contingent (Co. D) to the 42nd Virginia. Captain Joel Leftwich and Lts. Nicholas Kabler and Oscar Spriggs led the unit.

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[6] *Ibid.*, May 5-June 12, 1861.
[7] Memoranda of George P. Airhart, University of Virginia Archives.
[8] Allen Wright, "History of the 42nd Virginia Infantry," typescript in the Virginia Archives. Hereafter cited as Wright, "History".
[9] Company C muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Virginia State Archives.
[10] Company H muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., *Ibid.*

From Floyd County came Co. B, commanded by Capt. Henry Lane and Lt. Abner Dobyns. The two officers stood as quite a contrast, with Lane six feet one inch tall and Dobyns only five feet five. Near May 25, the company formed at Jacksonville and thence moved to Lynchburg for the rendezvous with other units.

Colonel Jubal A. Early, superseded Lt. Col. D. A. Langhorne as commander of the Lynchburg district, sized up the arrivals by remarking: "Most companies of infantry are arriving with no arms whatever and I guess there are no companies in counties from which they came which are armed. . . ."[11] Deeply concerned about his unarmed recruits, Early implored Richmond to send to him 5,000 stand of musket and smaller numbers of knapsacks, tents, mess pans, and camp kettles. The Colonel believed that matters were in a confused state because of the inexperience of the officers in all departments.[12]

The unit drilled and performed routine camp duties at Lynchburg. Because the original camps at Lynchburg were filthy and overcrowded, the 42nd Virginia soon moved first to Camp Davis and White Rock to Camp Lee in the Lynchburg area. At Camp Lee, the recruit faced reveille at 5 A.M., drill at 8:55, 10:55 and again at 3:55 P.M.[13]

According to Lt. Christopher Wingfield of Co. F, provisions at Camp Lee were in abundant supply. He wrote that he had "enough to eat" such as "shoulder meat, beef, coffee, sugar, and occasionally molasses." He bemoaned the rough ration of food and the absence of corn bread such as he had enjoyed in Henry County. Wingfield went on to observe that "I would give almost anything for a glass of good buttermilk and a nice hoe cake."[14] By Wingfield's account, fully a third of the company suffered from diarrhea owing in large measure to the unsanitary conditions in camp. Measles became so widespread that Wingfield was forced to institute nursing care for the sick.

Nearly every army is plagued by its "camp followers," and the 42nd Virginia was no exception. On July 8, Wingfield noted: "The camp is a great place for immorality, and unless [one] is very much on guard he will be very apt to contact some evil practices." He expressed confidence, however, that he had "control" over his "passions" and hoped to be able to "resist all things calculated to degrade and demoralize."[15] Writing from Camp Lee on the same day, Capt. Hereford reported on other aspects of the companies' activities such as Lt. Col. Langhorne's bestowing the honor of bearing the colors upon eight of his men, utilizing the orderly sergeant in preparing the muster roll, and requesting "one other good colitch [colleague.]"[16]

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[11] *O. R.*, II, 851.
[12] *Ibid.*, 851.
[13] Scrapbook of Nannie E. Kent, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.
[14] Christopher Wingfield to Benjamin Gravely, July 8, 1861, typescript in possession of Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., Blacksburg, Virginia. Hereafter cited as Gravely Letters.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] Josiah W. Hereford to Benjamin Gravely, July 8, 1861, *Ibid.*

Colonel Jesse Spinner Burks of Davis Store, Bedford County, took command of the 42nd Virginia at Lynchburg and guided it through the first year of the war. Born in 1823, he was graduated in 1844 from VMI, ranking sixth in a class of nine. His main interests lay in farming and grazing, and he bore the reputation of being one of the best financiers in the county.[17]

The companies continued to flow into Lynchburg in the month of June. An article, datelined June 29 from Salem, reported that a "fourth volunteer company, the "Dixie Grays," commanded by Capt. A. J. Deyerle" departed on June 28 for Lynchburg. The company consisted of "seventy-four rank and file." While other larger counties may have sent more troops than "Little Roanoke," the author of the article bragged that he "would venture to say none have [sic] better ones."[18]

Upon arrival in Lynchburg, all new recruits faced the new and unfamiliar experience of military drill. The drillmaster, John M. Payne of Amherst, seemed more accustomed to military life than the green troops. He had been through the rudiments of drill since December, 1860, when student military companies were organized at the University of Virginia.[19] Payne recalled that when the call to arms came, he returned to the University, packed his books and returned home. He received orders to report to Col. J. A. Early, commanding officer of the Lynchburg camp where Payne was soon put to drilling the 24th, 28th, and 42nd Virginia Regiments. After completing the training, Payne commanded a company until the Regiment reached Pocahontas County.[20]

Most enlisted men of the 42nd Virginia probably considered farming as their chief occupation, since they came from the tobacco-rich counties of the Virginia Piedmont. Professional men such as lawyers and physicians were predominate among the officer class. William McCauley, Co. E, claimed the distinction of being the 42nd Virginia's lone historian. McCauley, a Roanoke College graduate, taught school and later wrote a *History of Roanoke County*.[21] The only descriptive muster roll for the 42nd Virginia reveals a very small distribution of occupations besides farmers: 68 teamsters, 5 smiths, and 1 wagon master.

The only muster roll containing ages for an element of the Regiment is that of Co. B, Floyd County. On this muster roll, the most frequently appearing ages were eighteen and twenty. Over three-fourths of the company's manpower fell in the 18-25 age group.

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[17] R. A. Brock, *Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia* (Richmond, 1886), 414. Hereafter cited as Brock, *Hardesty's Encyclopedia*.

[18] Richmond *Dispatch*, July 2, 1861.

[19] John Hammond Moore, "The University of Virginia During the Civil War," *Virginia Cavalcade*, XIII (Winter 1963-1964), 23.

[20] *Confederate Veteran*, XL (1932), 258.

[21] F. A. Writers Program, *Roanoke: Story of County and City* (Roanoke, 1942), 115-16.

From a study of this muster roll, the youngest member was sixteen-year-old John Helms. The oldest man, Micheal King, Sr., age forty-five, was among those surrendering at Appomattox.

Despite the confusion and banalities of camp life, the 42nd Virginia on July 20 left Lynchburg for Beverly, Virginia, to begin four years of arduous struggle for a cause no member of the Regiment believed could be lost.

At Lynchburg, the 42nd Virginia received its initial regimental orders. The unit's first assignment was to Brig. Gen. William W. Loring's brigade, comprising part of Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of the Northwest. On July 20, Col. William Gilham, commanding the 21st Virginia, reported that he had dispatched his own regiment and "Colonel Burks, the 42nd, for the same point, Monterey." Calling attention to the units' inadequacy of supplies and ammunition, Gilham vehemently declared that it was "absolutely necessary to have the ammunition requisitions filled."[22]

Despite shortages in materiel, the 42nd Virginia left Lynchburg for the journey to Staunton via the Orange and Alexandria and Virginia Central Railroads. On July 23, the Regiment reached Monterey, a tiny village in Highland County, ten miles east of the principal ridges of the Allegheny Mountain Range. Here, the 42nd Virginia rested overnight before taking up the line of march to Huntersville.[23]

On Friday, July 26, the 42nd Virginia arrived at Huntersville, the county seat of Pocahontas County. The Regiment remained there until the end of the month and engaged principally in drill activities. For more than a week after July 22, intermittent rain wrapped the mountainous area in mists and turned the roads into seas of mud.[24]

At 1 P.M., August 1, the Regiment left Huntersville. Crossing the Greenbrier River, the men stopped only long enough to eat. The 42nd Virginia marched through the night before bivouacking about seventeen miles from Huntersville. Exhausted from the wearisome march, the men remained in camp for the next two days.[25]

The precious moments of relaxation remained short-lived, for the Regiment received orders to proceed to Big Springs, ten to twelve miles distant. Breaking camp on August 4, the 42nd Virginia moved that day to Big Springs. While camped at Big Springs, the men engaged in picket duty.[26]

On August 7, the 42nd Virginia broke camp and moved to Cheat Mountain—a place, Capt. Samuel Mullins recalled, "I can never forget, as it has allurements with all its painful recollections."[27] Cheat

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[22] *O. R.*, LI, pt. 2, 184.
[23] Mullins Diary, July 23-25, 1861.
[24] *Ibid.*, July 26-31, 1861.
[25] *Ibid.*, Aug. 1-3, 1861.
[26] *Ibid.*, Aug. 4-6, 1861.
[27] *Ibid.*, Aug. 7, 1861.

Mountain has been described as "a long crossing at an elevation of 3500 feet, easily swept by artillery on its summit."[28] This eminence served as the lone position on the Allegheny Mountain chain held by the Federals. The men remained in camp throughout the next day and a half before returning to picket duty.[29]

During the evening of August 9, the 42nd Virginia moved to picket duty at Elk River about eight miles from camp. Soon after the men got underway, rain resumed falling. Captain Mullins remarked that it was "the hardest rain I ever saw fall, I think, and it rained nearly all the time until the next evening." Forward movement continued, although Mullins thought road conditions "the worst I ever saw." On reaching Elk River, pickets took positions on both sides of the river. While posting some outer pickets, Capt. Mullins crossed the dry bed of the river only to return and discover water four or five feet deep in the spot he had just crossed. Cut off from the main body of troops, Mullins spent the night sleeping on a large rock. With the dawn, he crossed the river and observed the hunger of his men who "skinned the bark from trees and ate it."[30]

With the constant downfall of rain, the roads in the region soon turned into a veritable slough, thus slowing the transport of supplies to the Regiment. Owing to the miserable weather and lack of battle activity, tensions and morale neared the breaking point. Dislike of officers naturally became more prevalent. One soldier observed:

> Captain Hereford has been treating me for some time with undue disrespect and neglecting his company in the way of drawing rations and seems to care for nothing but running to the other captains' tents feasting and drinking with them and when he is drinking he has no sense about anything. He says hard things to me and won't apologize for anything he does.[31]

The 42nd Virginia spent the next ten days attending to camp duties and drilling. In the early hours of August 20, the Regiment awoke from slumber to the beat of drums. As rumors spread of a Federal advance toward the camp, the men had orders to be ready to march within minutes. Rain continued to pour down as the Regiment moved off in the direction of the suspected Federal advance. The 42nd Virginia spent the entire day and over half of the next awaiting the Federal assault. Near dusk, it was ascertained that the suspected troops were not Federals, but those of the 3rd Arkansas Infantry. The contingent, commanded by Col. Albert Rust, had somehow lost its way in the deep underbrush. After helping the Arkansans find the right road, the 42nd Virginia returned dejectedly to camp.[32]

From August 22 through September 8, the Regiment remained in camp and engaged in drill, picket, and camp duty. After intermin-

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[28] Douglas S. Freeman, *R. E. Lee, A Biography*, (New York, 1934) I, 545. Hereafter cited as Freeman, *Lee*.
[29] Mullins Diary, Aug. 7-8, 1861.
[30] Ibid., Aug. 9, 1861.
[31] W. F. Law to Benjamin Gravely, Gravely Letters, Aug. 15, 1861.
[32] Mullins Diary, Aug. 20, 1861.

able delay, Gen. Lee finally conceived a plan for a coordinated attack against the Federals on Cheat Mountain by Rust's Arkansans and by the 42nd Virginia. Preliminary movements began on the night of September 11, with the assault scheduled for the following day. Seven days' rations were issued to the 42nd Virginia and other troops undertaking the assault.[33]

At dusk, September 11, the Regiment struck tents and loaded wagons amid constant rainfall. Speaking passionately of that night, Capt. Mullins noted: "We stood in rain until about midnight when we had orders to march and oh what a dark, muddy, slippery, wet time we had." By dawn of September 12, the rain had turned to fog. In the early morning hours, the 42nd Virginia waded Tygart's Valley River, ate a hearty breakfast, and resumed the line of march. Thursday, September 12, turned out to be a signal day for the Regiment: the men heard the cannon of the enemy for the first time. During the day, advancing pickets of the Regiment came under the fire of Federal artillery. The Virginians advanced within a mile of the Federal fortifications on Cheat Mountain and bivouacked for the night.[34]

On Friday, September 13, the Regiment remained in line of battle, while engaging in skirmishing and reconnoitering operations the entire day. Since Col. Rust's command failed to attack the Federals on Cheat Mountain, Gen. Lee decided that any hope of attack from the west side of the river would be futile. With Lee's reconsideration of attack, the 42nd Virginia received orders to return to Valley Mountain. On September 15, a hungry, fatigued and demoralized contingent arrived at the old camp.[35]

On September 18, the 42nd Virginia struck camp and moved back toward Greenbrier Bridge. Since rain had fallen almost daily since July 22, the roads in the Allegheny Mountain region resembled the morasses of Dante's *Inferno*. In order to facilitate quicker movement, the men carried nearly everything on their backs, since "it was as much as the horses could do to haul the empty wagons and officers' baggage." Late that evening, the men reached Big Springs, where the Regiment had camped nearly a month before. On September 23, the 42nd Virginia reached Greenbrier Bridge.[36]

On the morning of September 25, the 42nd Virginia left Marlin's Bottom, near the Greenbrier Bridge, to reinforce Brig. Gens. John B. Floyd and Henry A. Wise at Big Sewell Mountain. A forced march of four days followed through very rough weather. Once again, the elements led Captain Mullins to remark: "Today it rained and the wind blew. Oh! It is a horrible day."[37]

Toward dusk on September 29, the Regiment reached Big Sewell Mountain, a mile and a half from the Federal encampment. The

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[33] Freeman, *Lee*, I, 562-64.
[34] Mullins Diary, Sept. 11-12, 1861.
[35] *Ibid.*, Sept. 15-17, 1861.
[36] *Ibid.*, Sept. 18-24, 1861.
[37] *Ibid.*, Sept. 25-28, 1861.

42nd Virginia remained at Big Sewell until October 5, and was involved in no combat. During the evening of October 5, the Federals abandoned the region. The Virginians gave pursuit for a short distance until stopped by a road block the Federals left behind them.[38]

The 42nd Virginia remained at Big Sewell until October 20. Many soldiers suffered from camp fever and assorted maladies brought on by the miserable weather of recent months. Six days later, the Regiment arrived at its former headquarters at Marlin's Bottom in Pocahontas County.[39]

By December 16, the 42nd Virginia was part of the Army of the Valley, commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson. General Jackson had already made plans for an attack on Romney, a tiny community forty miles west of Winchester. Jackson hoped to prevent the reconstruction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in that region. His advance awaited the arrival of Gen. Loring's Second and Third Brigades, the 42nd Virginia amongst them. Lost somewhere in the hills south of Winchester, Loring's troops seemed pathetically slow in reaching Jackson's headquarters.[40]

On December 24, the 42nd Virginia arrived at Strasburg in the midst of a snow storm. The Regiment marched to Winchester on Christmas Day and celebrated the holiday with cups of eggnog. The next day, the men reached Winchester. For five days, the Virginians remained in camp about two miles from town.[41]

On the morning of January 1, 1862, the 42nd Virginia marched with Jackson's forces in the direction of Berkeley Springs, along the Maryland-Virginia border. The Regiment bivouacked that night near Pughtown. "As it did so," Chambers notes: "the temperature was dropping fast." Signs of winter seemed evident everywhere with "streams freezing" and "winds slicing like scythes."[42]

Throughout January 2, the Regiment continued its march toward Berkeley Springs. Near sundown on January 3, the Regiment came within four miles of the town and surprised Federal pickets guarding it. Captain Mullins reported: "We took a few prisoners and killed three and had a man or two wounded." The men were preparing to bivouack for the night when once again snow began to fall. Without tents, the men wrapped themselves in blankets and tried to withstand the elements as best they could. Aroused from sleep at 3 A.M., Company A stood picket for an hour amid intense cold and falling snow. Remembering his duty, Capt. Mullins stated: "Then came some of the realities of war, no fire. But we stood it out and returned to camp."[43]

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[38] *Ibid.*, Sept. 29-Oct. 6, 1861.
[39] *Ibid.*, Oct. 7-26, 1861.
[40] Lenoir Chambers, *Stonewall Jackson*, (New York, 1959), I, 410. Hereafter cited as Chambers, *Stonewall Jackson*.
[41] Mullins Diary, Dec. 24-31, 1861.
[42] Chambers, *Stonewall Jackson*, I, 419-20.
[43] Mullins Diary, Jan. 2-3, 1862.

Soon, the sheer weight of numbers brought the conflict to Federal advantage. In addition, after two hours of steady firing, the Confederates had begun running out of ammunition. Because Gen. Garnett's Stonewall Brigade bore the brunt of the Federal offensive, Garnett took it upon himself to order a withdrawal. This retreat enraged Jackson, for he still had the 5th and 42nd Virginia in reserve. When orders came to beat the rally, some retreating soldiers turned back to continue the conflict; but the withdrawal soon became a full retreat.

Concluding that immediate action might be the only way of preventing annihilation, Jackson sent forward the 5th and 42nd Virginia. The men moved into line of battle and started to advance over the crest of the hill, near the Valley Turnpike. At the peak, the 42nd Virginia ran into fire of Federal skirmishers attempting to advance up the hill. Adjusting to the Federal positions, the Regiment raked the enemy lines with musketry.[56]

According to battle reports, the Virginians fought bravely and gallantly. Newspaper accounts pictured the officers of the 42nd Virginia in most heroic fashion. One correspondent, remarked of Capt. William B. Rector of Co. I: "He behaved most valiantly and when shot was standing on a stump waving his sword and cheering on his men."[57] Lieutenant Col. Daniel A. Langhorne gained mention for fighting after his horse had been shot from under him.[58] Colonel Jesse Burks "received a very slight wound in the hip, not severe enough to disconcert him in the least." Burks' horse "was struck two or three times but carried him safely from the field."[59]

Perhaps moved by the intensity of the struggle, a reporter spoke glowingly of the 42nd Virginia at Kernstown. He commented that "the regiment was the last that received the order, the last that left the field, and the regiment that closed the retreat." Turning a bit melodramatic, he added: "What strikes us so sensibly is that, when left alone upon that dreary night, and apparently deserted by all brave sons of the Old Dominion, they stood bravely and still fought beneath their floating banner." The reporter concluded: "Ye are the remnants of well-fought field."[60]

Though the battle ended in defeat for the Confederates, the steadfastness of the 42nd Virginia continued long enough for the remainder of Jackson's forces to clear the hillsides and reach the Valley Turnpike. Yet the Regiment's heroics were costly in human life. The 42nd Virginia lost 70 men, second in casualties only to the 37th Virginia, with a loss of 113 men.[61]

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[56] *Ibid.*, 404-05.
[57] Richmond *Dispatch*, Apr. 1, 1862.
[58] *Ibid.*, Apr. 8, 1862.
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] *Ibid.*, Apr. 11, 1862.
[61] William F. Fox, *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War, 1861-1865* (Albany, N. Y., 1889), 361.

The 42nd Virginia received more distressing news when it was learned that Col. Jesse S. Burks was incapacitated for further military srevice because of injuries received at Kernstown. His successor was Lt. Col. William Martin of Henry County. Martin had received his education at the University of Virginia and had served as a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1850-1851. Before the war, he gained the reputation of an outstanding lawyer.[62]

The 42nd Virginia suffered long and hard throughout the Cheat Mountain and Romney campaigns; yet when called to battle, it performed valiantly. Kernstown, Capt. A. J. Deyerle recalled, "began one of the most successful campaigns in ancient and modern warfare of which I have seen any account."[63] The conflict at Kernstown marked the beginning of Jackson's famous Valley Campaign, a three-month affair which would see the outnumbered Confederates facing Union advances.

Following Kernstown, the 42nd Virginia kept out of military action for nearly two months. Yet, this period was not one of leisure. Company commanders such as Capts. Andrew J. Deyerle and Samuel J. Mullins returned to their home counties on recruiting trips, for the initial one-year enlistment period was nearing expiration.

Such recruiting trips sometimes encountered difficulty. While recruiting in Salem, Capt. Deyerle encountered "a lot of desperadoes calling themselves Union men." Under the influence of alcohol, this group marched down the streets of Salem, brandishing sticks, and yelling "Down with the Rebels!" Cursing as they moved along, the men confronted Capt. Deyerle. He immediately ordered them to stop their actions. As Deyerle spoke, one of the malcontents rushed at him with a stick. At this point, Deyerle noted: "I drew my revolver and as he did not stop, I gave him two shots. I then knocked him down with my revolver." The men ran off while the assailant was borne to jail. Deyerle recalled: "That was the last heard of disloyalty during the war in Roanoke County."[64]

On April 9, Capt. Deyerle and his recruits reached Jackson's forces at Rude's Hill near Mount Jackson.[65] Remaining in this vicinity until the middle of the month, the 42nd Virginia then broke camp and moved to Elk Run Valley, where it took a position defending Swift Run Gap. While camped at this unassailable location, Jackson "armed and equipped all new recruits."[66] Slow to action, Federal Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks seemed reluctant to pursue Jackson's forces. For the time being, the principal military activity between the forces consisted of minor skirmishing.

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[62] Virginia and Lewis G. Pedigo, *History of Patrick and Henry Counties Virginia* (Roanoke, 1933), 191.

[63] Deyerle, "Memoirs", 5.

[64] Ibid., 6. Despite the incident, Deyerle found fifty recruits for the company.

[65] Ibid., 8.

[66] Ibid.

Wasting little time Jackson gathered his division and advanced toward Staunton. On Sunday, May 4, the division reached Staunton. Joining forces with Gen. Edward Johnson, Jackson then marched to McDowell, a tiny community beyond Bull Pasture Mountain in the Shenandoah Valley.

On May 8, the 42nd Virginia moved into battle at McDowell. Arriving late in the afternoon, the Regiment did not engage in the fighting. From 9 P.M. until midnight, the unit was on the battlefield, aiding in the removal of dead and wounded comrades.[67]

The 42nd Virginia did not engage again in military activities until late May, when Gen. Richard B. Ewell's forces joined Jackson and took up the line of march northward. On Friday, May 23, the Regiment decamped along the Luray and Front Royal Road and marched to Front Royal. By the time the 42nd Virginia reached the town, Jackson had already routed the Federals. The following day, the Regiment pursued the enemy along the Middletown and Winchester Roads. Near Kernstown, the 42nd Virginia rested for an hour before moving to Winchester.[68]

By 5 A.M., May 25, the 42nd Virginia was in a position on a cluster of hills southwest of Winchester. Here the Regiment supported Capt. William E. Cutshaw's battery. In the engagement that followed, Maj. Henry Lane of Co. B, temporarily commanding the 42nd Virginia, received wounds. Captain John E. Penn of Co. H then assumed command. The Regiment retained its position on the hill, protected from enemy fire by rifle pits.[69]

On May 30, the Regiment moved to Halltown. Three days later, near Woodstock, Col. Thomas T. Munford's Second Virginia Cavalry engaged in covering a retreat of some Confederate troops. Emerging from the woods, the 42nd Virginia mistook the cavalry for Federals and sent a volley of fire into the mounted squad, wounding several men and causing a stampede.[70]

By June 8, the 42nd Virginia was in camp about a mile and a half from Port Republic. Between 8 and 9 A. M. that day, the Regiment received orders to load wagons and form quickly. The men marched along Harrisonburg Road and took position on the heights near Port Republic. Leaving the heights, the 42nd Virginia stationed itself in an open field to the rear of the Confederate batteries. Around 1 P. M., the Regiment moved approximately four miles along Harrisonburg Road to an open field under heavy cannon and musketry fire.[71]

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[67] O. R., XII, pt. 1, 477.
[68] Ibid., 765.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid., 731.
[71] Ibid., 765-66. This engagement is popularly known as the battle of Cross Keys.

The 42nd Virginia moved to a woods along the Port Republic Road, where Capt. Hugh M. Nelson of Ewell's staff sent the men to the brow of a hill occupied by Confederate batteries. Two companies of skirmishers, commanded by Capt. Abner Dobyns of Co. B, moved down a steep hill and across a creek. On the other side of the stream, the skirmishers drove back an entire regiment of Federals. The troops crossed still another stream and headed for the road. The 42nd Virginia bivouacked for the night in view of "Federal camp fires and sound of their voices."[72]

Around 11 P. M., regimental pickets captured five men of a Federal scouting party from the 5th Connecticut Cavalry. When questioned, the scouts seemed unaware of the 42nd Virginia's presence.[73]

On June 9, the 42nd Virginia brought up the rear of a column that crossed the bridge at Port Republic. The men marched down the Shenandoah River for some two-three miles before encountering the Federal forces of Gen. James Shields. The Federals were routed. Orders came to move out across the mountain at Brown's Gap. That night the Virginians camped on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge.[74] With the Confederate victory at Port Republic, Jackson's Valley Campaign ended. Now the Confederates in the Valley could turn their attention to Richmond. The task of saving the Confederate capital from Federal invasion seemed paramount.

On June 17, the unit broke camp and took up the line of march toward Gordonsville by way of Brown's Gap. By June 25, the Regiment had reached Ashland outside Richmond. Two days later, the 42nd Virginia entered the heart of the conflict near Gaines Mill.[75]

As the 42nd Virginia advanced, the Federals fled the woods immediately to the Regiment's front, leaving many dead and wounded. The Virginians entered the woods and took 30-40 unhurt prisoners hidden among the thick brush and felled trees. The 42nd Regiment lay on its arms on the battlefield that night.[76] According to regimental reports nothing of importance occurred during the next four days.

On the evening of July 1, the 42nd Virginia heard heavy firing to its front and received orders to take position in the woods near Malvern Hill, a magnificent promontory some 2,000 feet in elevation.[77] On its crest the Federals had placed "forty pieces of cannon;" and from it they could easily view and perhaps disrupt

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[illegible]

movements by the Confederate troops. Yet the 42nd Virginia suffered no casualties from the Federal bombardment.[78]

Remaining in the woods at the base of Malvern Hill, the Regiment received orders to move in the direction of the battle. Yet when the 42nd Virginia reached the field, the action in that sector had nearly ceased. With darkness setting in, the unit remained in the field at the base of Malvern Hill. During the night, the Federals withdrew from their position.

After Malvern Hill, Jackson received orders to pursue the Federal forces near Harrison's Landing. While encamped, Asst. Quartermaster Fleming Saunders of the 42nd Virginia wrote home to his mother on an abandoned Federal "soldiers portfolio." Remarking on Malvern Hill, he reported that the deserted enemy camps contained "great numbers of knapsacks," and that "the Federals even piled up knapsacks as breastworks." He added: "throughout battlefields, one can see the most intensive destruction." Saunders declared that Lee's army would "have been glorious" if it had "succeeded in catching McClellan's army;" but "as it is," he boasted, "we have much cause for joy."[79]

On July 8, word came that President Lincoln dispatched an army under Maj. Gen. John B. Pope to make a new attack on Richmond. A member of the 42nd Virginia remarked on Pope: "He will have a rough way to go; he will have a stone wall to go over, a steep hill to climb, and a long street to pass before he gets to Richmond."[80] By July 11, the unit had moved back to the Richmond area, camping along the Mechanicsville turnpike.

Near August 9, Gen. Pope's forces were at Cedar Mountain, near Culpeper Court House, At 3:30 P. M., the Regiment marched toward Cedar Mountain, where a battle had begun. As the men advanced, they came under enemy fire. The unit thereupon left the road and filed into a wooded area. The advance continued until the 42nd Virginia approached a wheat field in front of the Federal batteries. The men formed in line of battle and prepared to charge the battery. Yet before the 42nd Virginia could advance, a large body of Federal infantry appeared in its front.[81]

The Regiment stood beside a fence running parallel to the south side of the wheat field. Here, the unit awaited the Federal attack. Moments later, Federals concealed in a second wood to the 42nd Virginia's front began their advance. Before the order to change fronts could be executed, the Regiment came under fire from its rear.[82]

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[78] *Ibid.*

[79] Fleming Saunders to Mrs. Alice Watt Saunders, July 5, 1862, University of Virginia Archives, Rotunda cited as Saunders Papers.

[80] Dayvis, "Memoirs", 7.

[81] O.R., XII, pt. 2, 206.

[82] *Ibid.*, 201.

The Federals were overrunning both flanks of the 42nd Virginia. The Regiment attempted to fall back; yet according to Capt. Abner Dobyns, "a good many officers and soldiers of the Regiment were captured by the enemy and recaptured."[63]

At this point in the conflict, members of the 42nd Virginia succumbed to great confusion and scattered in every direction. Noting the disintegration of the unit, Jackson ordered Gen. Lawrence Branch's brigade to the aid of the Virginians. With renewed courage, the fleeing Confederates terminated their flight, turning about to drive Federals from their path. Reaching the wheat field, the Federals continued their withdrawal. The 42nd Virginia marched across the wheat field into the cornfield and bivouacked for the night.[64]

Unlike the Valley and Seven Days Battles, the Cedar Mountain conflict proved costly to the 42nd Virginia. The Regiment lost 107 men, second in casualties only to those for the 21st Virginia.[65] The Regiment lost Maj. Henry Lane and Capt. Andrew J. Deyerle. Though the wounds of the latter were not fatal, the injuries to his hip and groin made it impossible for him to ride a horse. Deyerle returned to Roanoke County and served thereafter as an enrolling officer.[66]

The 42nd Virginia suffered the loss of its second regimental commander within five months. On July 24, Dr. L. M. Smith, regimental surgeon, found Lt. Col. William Martin unfit for further duty. Martin suffered from camp fever, which seriously affected his lungs and digestive organs. No successor was named.[67]

After the battle of Cedar Mountain, the 42nd Virginia moved to the vicinity of Gordonsville, where it rested for several days. Then the Regiment broke camp and moved north toward Mount Pisgah Church, where it remained for five days. On August 20, Jackson's forces crossed the Rapidan and arrived two days later in the area of the upper Rappahannock. During the afternoon of August 24, Gens. Lee and Jackson met at Jeffersonton in Culpeper County to plot strategy against Federal Gen. Pope.

Leaving Jeffersonton on August 25, Jackson's men marched around Bull Run Mountain and moved to Manassas Junction, Pope's supply base. At dawn, August 27, with little Federal interference, the Regiment reached Manassas Junction where the Confederates routed the Federals stationed there. Famished from its fifty-mile circling movement, the Regiment helped itself to the foodstuffs at hand. Baker's bread, cheese, coffee, sugar, crackers, bacon and canned beef were all devoured by the hungry men.

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[63] *Ibid.*, 205-06. Some of the recaptured Confederates reported not only cruel treatment at the hands of the Federals but also witnessing the brutal murders of captured comrades.
[64] *Ibid.*, 206.
[65] *Ibid.*, 176.
[66] Dyer, "Memoirs", 7.
[67] William Martin's personal service file, War Record Groups 109, National Archives.

Lieutenant David Garrett of Co. C noted, "that having supplied himself with bread, he was putting butter on it when 'Stonewall' Jackson entered the same sutlers tent and gave himself up to the same pleasing occupation."[88]

Jackson continued munching bread while carrying on a commentary with Lt. Garrett of Co. C about the sound of firing near Bealton.[89] The moments of pleasure were short, for reports came in of Federal forces advancing rapidly toward Manassas.

Near sundown, August 27, the 42nd Virginia left Manassas for Groveton. While stationed at Groveton, the unit served as pickets and engaged in some skirmishing.[90]

During the afternoon of August 29, a Federal unit appeared near the railroad cut outside Groveton. Colonel Bradley T. Johnson ordered the 42nd Virginia and the Second Brigade to charge. With a yell, the Confederates went through the Federal lines, "shattering, breaking, and routing them." Johnson commented "that the struggle was brief but not a man faltered and with closed ranks, the rush was unstoppable."[91] The troops drove the Federals into and from a railroad cut. As the Confederates returned to the cut, "a Yankee battery of eight guns" rained fire upon them. Somewhat confused the Second Brigade turned to face the battery. Private John Worsham of the 21st Virginia vividly described the movement:

> As we did so, I heard a thud on my right, as if one had been struck with a heavy fist. Looking around, I saw a man at my side who was standing erect, with his head off and a stream of blood spurting from his neck. He was Captain Nicholas Cabler [Kabler, Co. D] of the 42nd Virginia, and his brains and blood bespattered the face and clothing of one of my company who was standing in the rear.[92]

In his report, Col. Johnson stated: "The 42nd Virginia is entitled to the credit for capturing the colors of the attacking brigade, which was Sickle's Excelsior, having run over them after the enemy."[93]

On Saturday, August 30, Johnson placed the 42nd Virginia in the conquered railroad cut. Captain John E. Penn assumed command. At 4 P. M., the Federals charged the Virginians. With the aid of the 21st Regiment and Irish Battalion, the 42nd Virginia held its position. The three units breasted the storm and repulsed a force outnumbering their own. The Regiment continued fighting even after exhausting its ammunition by throwing stones until the remainder of Jackson's forces came to their aid.[94] The brilliant

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[88] Brock, *Hardesty's Encyclopedia*, 397.
[89] *Ibid.*
[90] *O.R.*, XII, pt. 2, 664-65.
[91] *Ibid.*, 665.
[92] John H. Worsham, *One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry*, ed. James I. Robertson, Jr. (Jackson, Tenn., 1964), 77. Hereafter cited as Worsham, *Foot Cavalry*.
[93] *O.R.*, XII, pt. 2, 666.
[94] *Ibid.*

defense of the 42nd Virginia was not achieved cheaply. A total of sixty-two casualties resulted from the conflict on Manassas Plains.[55]

On Sunday, August 31, the Regiment crossed Sudley Ford and bivouacked for the night on Aldie Road. By Friday, September 5, the 42nd Virginia crossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks into Maryland and arrived at Frederick the following day.[56]

Four days later, the Regiment left Frederick and advanced up the National Road to Middletown, thence to Bolivar Heights opposite the town of Harper's Ferry, at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. By September 15, Confederate artillery fire from the heights caused the Union garrison inside the town to surrender. Thus far, the 42nd Virginia remained unscathed in Lee's first invasion north of the Potomac.

On September 17, the 42nd Virginia moved to Sharpsburg, a farm community in the quiet hills and woods of Maryland near Antietam Creek. After passing through Sharpsburg, the unit moved to the "West Wood" along Hagerstown Road. As the Federals swept forward, the Confederates delivered a raking fire that caused the enemy to withdraw. With the aid of reinforcements, the Confederates eventually repulsed the Federals.[57]

Nearly two months of relaxation followed the conflict at Antietam Creek. Camping near Winchester, Jackson's forces kept busy equipping for the coming year. On November 14, the 42nd Virginia left the vicinity of Winchester and was dispersed among various camps in the lower Valley.

On Friday, December 12, the 42nd Virginia reached Fredericksburg and took a reserve position to the left of town. Shells of the enemy burst about the men as they lay on their arms. By afternoon, heavy musketry was in progress. The Regiment moved within firing range of the Federals. In this position, it held fast for the remainder of the day.[58]

At dawn, December 14, the 42nd Virginia advanced to the front to relieve the forces of Brig. Gen. James H. Lane. The Regiment was disappointed that the enemy gave no signs of advancing. The Federals had expended themselves the day before. During the day, the 42nd Virginia skirmished with a group of Federal sharpshooters holding a hill overlooking the Confederate line.[59]

With the victory at Fredericksburg, the 42nd Virginia climaxed one of the most successful campaigns in military annals. The Regiment had participated in the victorious Valley campaign and the defensive Seven Days battles. It had played a significant role in thwart-

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[55] *Ibid.*, 980.
[56] *Ibid.*, 967.
[57] *Ibid.*, XIX, pt. 1, 1007.
[58] *Ibid.*, XXI, 567.
[59] *Ibid.*

ing persistent Federal advances in Virginia. The Regiment had an honorable part in the inconclusive invasion of Maryland. Like the Army of Northern Virginia in general, the 42nd Virginia Volunteers was now in 1863 ready again to cross the Potomac in a campaign that many a man must have hoped would prove the final and victorious year of the conflict.

By Christmas Day, 1862, Jackson's Second Corps had settled into winter quarters at Moss Neck in Orange County, less than twenty miles west of Fredericksburg. Resolving to camp with his men, Jackson erected his headquarters in tents around the Richard Corbin home.[100] Though the presence of the 42nd Virginia is not specifically recorded, it is likely that they went into winter quarters at Moss Neck. Most military activity in winter quarters consisted of picket duty, drill and inspection. Though kept busy by such activity, the common soldier grew impatient for a taste of military combat.

On March 16, 1863, Jackson moved his headquarters to Hamilton's Crossing in an effort to complete the abundance of paper work free of interruption. At Moss Neck, Jackson had been frequently interrupted by visitors and friends. The 42nd Virginia remained at Hamilton's Crossing for nearly six weeks.[101] While at Hamilton's Crossing, Capt. Robert Woodson Withers of Co. I received promotion to lieutenant colonel. Although only a captain, Withers had served as commander of the 42nd Virginia since Sharpsburg.[102] His military career resembled a rags-to-riches tale, for he had begun the war as a lowly orderly sergeant. Born at "Ivanhoe" in Campbell County, he was a cousin of Robert Enoch Withers, later a lieutenant governor and senator of Virginia.[103]

Meanwhile, the Federal forces had not remained idle. In January 1863, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker took command of the Army of the Potomac. Hooker's strategy called for a division of his army into two attack groups. Hooker would march with one element toward the west and appoach Fredericksburg from that vicinity. The other wing, commanded by Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick, would cross the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg as a distraction to Lee from the east. On April 28, learning of the Federal crossing near Fredericksburg, Jackson's forces left the Hamilton's Crossing area moving toward the Chancellorsville area.[104]

Shortly before dawn on May 1, the Regiment received orders to move toward Chancellorsville. On through the daylight hours, the Virginians continued the march. At dusk, the unit bivouacked along Plank Road, not far from the crossroads which was designated Chancellorsville.[105]

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[100] Henry Kyd Douglas, *I Rode With Stonewall* (Chapel Hill, 1940), 207.
[101] *Ibid.*, 211.
[102] Wright, "History", 2.
[103] Kent H. Early, *Campbell Chronicles and Family Sketches* (Lynchburg, 1927), 336.
[104] R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, *The Compact History of the Civil War* (New York, 1960), 139.
[105] O.R., XXV, pt. 1, 1005.

On the morning of May 2, the 42nd Virginia moved along Plank Road in support of Gen. Robert E. Rode's Division. At 4 P.M., orders came to advance through a dense woods and contact the enemy. In an open field near Talley's Farm, the 42nd Virginia and Second Brigade stood, entirely exposed to the Federals. The Federals, 400 yards to their front, lay protected by a line of earthworks. From this position the enemy poured heavy musket and artillery fire into the Confederates. Despite the raking fire, the men surged forward and carried the Federal breastworks. In their advance, the Regiment took a number of prisoners and several pieces of artillery.[106]

Though the 42nd Virginia did not advance that fateful Saturday night, Gen. Jackson remained persistent in his pursuit of the Federal forces. Accompanied by a half-dozen orderlies, he rode up and down the Confederate lines attempting to rally the troops. Subsequently, Jackson decided on a personal reconnaissance along Mountain Road, which paralleled Plank Road. Returning to the Confederate lines, Jackson was accidentally fired on by a Confederate regiment.[107]

With Jackson injured, command of the Second Corps fell to Gen. James E. B. Stuart. At dawn, May 3, the Confederates advanced to within a mile of Chancellorsville. On the south side of Plank Road, some 300-500 yards behind Heth's Brigade stood Gen. R. E. Colston's Division, containing the 42nd Virginia. From this position, the Regiment moved toward the Hazel Grove elevation. Occupying the log works there, the unit awaited Federal attack. Presently, Colston dispatched the Regiment to the offensive. Moving from the log works, the men advanced and engaged the enemy in a short, heated battle. The lack of troops and raking fire proved too much for the unit. They were forced to fall back to the log works. There the 42nd Virginia remained for several hours.[108]

Hearing of the Regiment's refusal to move forward, Stuart rode forward and urged the men to battle. Obeying Stuart's urgings, the Regiment moved back to the front. The Confederates charged and carried the enemy position. Yet the men soon became flanked by the enemy forcing it to withdraw from the log works. The Confederates fell back about 300 yards with heavy losses. Reforming, the unit advanced for the third time and drove the Federals from their artillery position. The Southerners soon received orders to move to the rear and obtain rations.[109]

The 42nd Virginia remained free of military engagements until late Sunday evening, May 3. During the late afternoon hours, the men advanced to Chancellorsville and under shell fire from Federal

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[106] *Ibid.*
[107] *Ibid.*, 1025.
[108] Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command* (New York, 1943), II, 596. Hereafter cited as Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*.
[109] *O.R.*, XXV, pt. 1, 1026.

batteries, formed a battle line along Plank Road. At dusk, the men took cover in the log works they had captured earlier.[110]

The battle of Chancellorsville took a heavy toll among the ranks of the 42nd Virginia. The Regiment suffered more casualties (135) at Chancellorsville than in any other engagement.[111] More importantly, Jackson never recovered from his wounds and died on May 10.

After Chancellorsville, the unit returned to camp at Hamilton's Crossing and remained there until the first week of June. Anticipating a movement of his unit, Asst. Quartermaster Fleming Saunders of the 42nd Virginia noted that although "General Lee needs all his men in the field, many men desert and go home." Probably recalling the many hard movements with Jackson, he added: "Hope we don't move tonight as night moves are unpleasant."[112]

Saunders's premonition soon gained fulfillment. On June 5, the Regiment left camp at Hamilton's Crossing and moved toward Winchester. The march to Pennsylvania had begun. Two days later, the 42nd Virginia reached Culpeper. From there, the unit marched to Cedarville. At dawn, June 13, the Regiment left Cedarville for Front Royal and the Winchester Turnpike. About noon, Federal skirmishers were discovered near Winchester. The Virginians moved along the Front Royal and Winchester Turnpike and concealed themselves in a woods. The following day, nothing of note occurred, as the 42nd Virginia did not engage in fighting.[113]

On June 16, the Regiment advanced to Shepherdstown, where the 42nd Virginia received orders to "destroy a number of canal boats and a quantity of grain and flour stored at different points" along the Potomac River. Two days later, the Regiment was in Maryland. Over a week later, the unit stood camped at Carlisle, Pa., on the road leading to Harrisburg. The 42nd Virginia soon moved southward from Carlisle to Scotland, Pa.[114]

On the morning of July 1, the Virginians left Scotland and marched to Gettysburg. Near sunset, the contingent arrived on the battlefield. There the Regiment took a position on the left of the Confederate line. Near 4 P.M., July 2, the 42nd Virginia advanced toward Culp's Hill. The Regiment came to the support of Snowden Andrews's Artillery Battalion. The 42nd Virginia crept to a position near the Federals and remained there until the artillery fire ceased. No loss of life resulted in this advance.[115]

With enemy shells bursting about them, the Virginians halted briefly at Rock Creek. Resuming the advance, the unit clambered up Culp's Hill, loading and firing all the while. Toward dusk, ter-

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[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid., 809.
[112] Fleming Saunders to Alice Watt Saunders, June 3, 1863, Saunders Papers.
[113] O.R., S.1 VII, pt. 2, 695-702.
[114] Ibid., 703.
[115] Ibid., 521.

rain began to confuse the advancing 42nd Virginia. Nevertheless, the Regiment drove the enemy to within thirty yards of the Federal works. The Virginians then fell back halfway down the hill, where they remained until ordered to reform behind Rock Creek with the Second Brigade.[116]

Throughout July 3, the Regiment remained in position fifty yards from the creek. Some skirmishing with the Federals ensued. At dawn, July 4, the 42nd Virginia advanced on a road to a new position approximately one mile from Gettysburg. The Regiment remained there, free of engagement, the entire day.[117] Casualties at Gettysburg for the Regiment numbered fifty-six; eight killed and forty-eight wounded.[118] Turnover in regimental command was even more pronounced at Gettysburg. Opening the conflict with Lt. Col. Robert W. Withers, command passed to first Capt. Samuel Suanders and then Capt. Jesse M. Richardson.[119]

Around 10 P.M., July 4, the 42nd Virginia left the hills west of Gettysburg. A week later, the Regiment crossed the Potomac at Martinsburg. On July 17, the unit aided in the destruction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at that place. That day and the next, Federal cavalry skirmished intermittently with the Confederates.[120]

Sometime near the middle of August, the Regiment reached Orange Court House. There, the unit encamped near "Montpelier," President James Madison's home. In early September, the 42nd Virginia broke camp and moved to Morton's Ford.[121]

Unoccupied by battle, morale of the Regiment naturally sagged. Desertion soon became a problem. In early November, three members of the 42nd Virginia were condemned to the firing squads for "desertion, under repeated and aggravated circumstances." The condemned were marched about six miles from Orange Court House within view of Mount Pisgah Church. There they were "bound to stakes" and shot as "six brigades of infantry looked on."[122]

During the early hours of November 27, the idleness temporarily came to a close. The 42nd Virginia received orders to leave Morton's Ford and march about ten miles toward Locust Grove. The Regiment marched past Barlett's Mill with the sound of skirmishing to their front. Hearing firing from the rear, the 42nd Virginia halted. With orders to about face, the men retraced their steps toward Bartlett's Mill. After advancing a half mile, the 42nd Virginia halted and set to work erecting fortifications of rails. Shortly thereafter, heavy musket fire began. The conflict led the brigadier to call up the 42nd Virginia.[123]

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[116] *Ibid.*
[117] *Ibid.*
[118] *Ibid.*, 340.
[119] *Ibid.*, 351.
[120] *Ibid.*, 354.
[121] James I. Robertson, Jr., *The Stonewall Brigade* (Baton Rouge, 1963), 210.
[122] Lynchburg *Republican*, Nov. 14, 1863.
[123] O.R., XXIX, pt. 1, 858.

At 4 P.M., the Regiment advanced to the woods in front of the Confederate line. In the woods, the difficulty of the terrain caused the 42nd Virginia to march intermittently at left and right flanks. Emerging from the woods, the unit made a complete wheel to the left into a field. Continuing across the field, the Regiment moved up the crest of a hill. After desultory firing, orders came to advance. Lieutenant Col. Withers discovered to his horror that the 42nd Virginia was the only unit advancing. Moving forward under galling fire, and completely exposed to the Federals, the Virginians fell "thick and fast." Ascertaining the futility of such an advance, Withers ordered the Regiment to retire to the position from which it had advanced. The withdrawal was accomplished in perfect order, as darkness ended the conflict. Subsequently, the 42nd Virginia returned to the road near Bartlett's Mill.[124]

Though forced to withdraw, Lt. Col. Withers wrote of his Virginians: "I can not speak too highly of their gallantry and coolness on that occasion." From November 28 to December 1, the 42nd Virginia awaited renewal of the conflict. Yet, the three days passed without incident.[125]

Following the engagements on Mine Run in the autumn of 1863; the Regiment went into winter quarters outside Orange Court House. In late December, food rations became exceedingly scarce. Yet the 42nd Virginia was apparently an exception. Fleming Saunders wrote his mother remarking that she not "send meat, as we have plenty." However, he pleaded for "some sorghum."[126]

The year 1863 was decisive for the Virginians. Opening with success at Chancellorsville, the Army of Northern Virginia appeared unstoppable. Jackson's loss proved costly as ensuing battles ended in strategic victories for the Federals. The optimistic 42nd Virginia of the preceding year may well have anticipated 1864 with a heavy note of pessimism.

The typical 42nd Virginia soldier looked out of his shelter on January 9, 1864, to see snow "to the depth of four inches." Closed in by the heavy snowfall and severe cold, his only desire was for "blankets and overcoats" to ward off the weather. Yet the enlistee could take reassurance that no military movements could be made in this type of weather.[127] Thus did the weeks pass for a regiment hampered by cold and idleness.

Contributing to extant discontent in the Regiment was the uncertainty in the payment of wages. A private's base pay of eleven dollars a month, approved by the Confederate Congress in 1861, still prevailed although living costs had skyrocketed.[128] In order to sooth

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[124] *Ibid.*
[125] *Ibid.*
[126] Fleming Saunders to Alice Watt Saunders, Dec. 3, 1863, Saunders Papers.
[127] *Richmond Enquirer*, Jan. 9, 1864.
[128] *O.R.*, Ser. IV, I, 130.

his discontent, Fleming Saunders stated in a letter home: "If you have $2,000 which you have no special use for, send it to me." Saunders wanted the money for use as "government funds" so as not to "withdraw pay until April 1."[129]

As reports spread of Federal advance in the Culpeper triangle near the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers, the unit on May 2, moved out of winter quarters and marched toward Chancellorsville.[130] At noon on May 4, the Regiment left camp along the Rapidan and moved about two miles south of Locust Grove, where it bivouacked for the night. The 42nd Virginia was at the edge of the Wilderness, a forest of "thick, briery underbrush and a dense screen of vines and creepers" which lay along the boundary of Orange and Spotsylvania Counties.[131]

At dawn, May 5, reports reached the Confederates that Federals in force were in the Wilderness. Shortly after 5 A.M., Federals began to wend their way down the Wilderness roads. During mid-morning, the 42nd Regiment left its camp site and moved up the Orange Turnpike. The 42nd Virginia led the advance of Ewell's Second Corps. About 11 P.M., the unit came in sight of Federals crossing Germanna Ford toward the Culpeper Plank Road.[132]

The Regiment immediately formed to the south of road, where the green bush presented a dense tangle. No open patches of land could be found, and men "could scarcely see twenty yards in their front." Soon, the Federal forces burst through the dense foliage and flanked the unit. Viewing the onrushing Federals pouring through the brush, the 42nd Virginia immediately turned and fled. The Regiment continued its flight, disrupting Gen. Cullen Battle's Brigade in its wake. At this point, the Virginians moved to the rear to reorganize.[133] On May 6, assaults were made against Ewell's forces, yet no record exists of the role of the 42nd Virginia in the conflict.

At dawn, May 8, the 42nd Virginia left the Wilderness and marched south toward Spotsylvania Court House, where it arrived about 5 P.M. and began erecting breastworks.[134] For three days, the Regiment aided in the construction of what came to be termed the "Mule Shoe." In final stages, the "Shoe" was a semi-circle that ran a distance of about three miles. Constructed of felled trees aand covered with earth and logs, the fortifications appeared quite formidable.[135]

Completing the construction of the salient, the 42nd Virginia then moved to a position at the very point of the fortifications. Before

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[129] Fleming Saunders to Alice Watt Saunders, Feb. 22, 1864, Saunders Papers.
[130] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.
[131] Clifford Dowdey, *Lee's Last Campaign: The Story of Lee and His Men against Grant—1864* (Boston, 1960), 32. Hereafter cited as Dowdey, *Lee's Last Campaign.*
[132] Hall, 30.
[133] Hall, 30-31.
[134] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.
[135] Dowdey, *Lee's Last Campaign*, 137.

midnight, May 11, pickets reported a steady loudness outside the salient. The massive movement of the enemy was underway.[136]

Around 4 A.M., the 42nd Virginia returned to the breastworks from picket duty. The march back through the thick fog brought chills to the fatigued Virginians.[137] Thirty minutes later, the heavy fog covering the woods began to lift. Minutes later, Federals could be heard advancing from the Landrum House, a half mile in front of the salient.[138] Despite an initial and forceful volley, the Federal masses proved too much for the Confederates.

Generals Edward Johnson and George Steuart were captured, along with over 2,000 Confederates.[139] Of the number captured, approximately 250 were members of the 42nd Virginia.[140] Included in the capture were seven officers of the 42nd Virginia: Capts. Abner Dobyns and J. W. Helm, Lts. T. S. Mitchell, P. M. Dalton, A. A. Angle, W. H. Hatcher and T. M. Gravely.[141] These officers became part of "The Immortal Six Hundred," a group of officers sent to Morris Island, S. C. While imprisoned there, the group came under fire of Confederate guns at Fort Sumter that bombarded the Federal positions in Charleston Harbor. According to one of the captured, the daily ration included: "Breakfast, four rotten hardtack crackers. Dinner, one half-pint sandy soup, and Supper, all the wind one could inhale."[142]

The majority of the Confederates posted at the "Bloody Angle" were either killed or captured. In the charge of the breastworks, Corp. Charles L. Russell of the 93d New York shot the colorbearer of the 42nd Virginia and captured the regimental flag.[143]

The Army of Northern Virginia remained preserved. Yet the cost had been high. The 42nd Virginia reassembled but a shadow of its former self. In fact, two days later, the unit became a part of Col. William Terry's brigade, a massive consolidation of the Jones, Stonewall, and Steuart Brigades.[144]

The 42nd Virginia remained in the general proximity of Spotsylvania for nearly two weeks after the battle. On May 24, the Regiment broke camp and marched toward Hanover Junction, about twenty-two miles from Richmond. Arriving there on May 25, the 42nd Virginia did not engage in any conflict. Four days later, the unit left Hanover Junction and advanced to Bethesda Church, where it erected a line of breastworks.[145]

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[136] Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, III, 399-400.
[137] *Ibid.*, 401.
[138] O.R., S.S.XVI, pt. 1, 392.
[139] *Ibid.*, 1075.
[140] Wright, "Memoirs", 3.
[141] John D. Worsley, *The Immortal Six Hundred: A Story of Cruelty to Confederate Prisoners of War* (Winchester, 1905), 225-44.
[142] *Ibid.*, 135.
[143] O.R., Ser. III, IV, 417.
[144] *Ibid.*, Ser. I, S.S.XVI, pt. 2, 1001.
[145] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.

Around June 1, the 42nd Virginia returned to Hanover Junction and remained there for about two weeks. On June 11, the Regiment had made a "successful flank movement on the enemy" and advanced to Gaines's Mill.[146]

Grant's move on Richmond left the common soldier little time for leisure. Writing to a friend from camp near Richmond, John Bouldin of Co. F noted: "I have little leisure time and have had a very hard time as I have been in three engagements since I have been here." Speculating as to Federal success, he stated: "Grant will make a great struggle to get to Richmond," although he "has lost many men." Describing the Federals he faced, Bouldin remembered them "charging our breastworks like tigers" and coming "in eight to ten columns." With slight exaggeration, Bouldin recalled that "our batteries mow them down like leaves on a tree."[147]

Shifting the train of thought abruptly, the Virginian recorded: "We get plenty to eat of bread and bacon." His ration included a half pound of bacon and eighteen ounces of corn meal. Bouldin, a conscript, quickly soured of military life after Spotsylvania. Recalling his conscription, he noted: "They didn't give me a chance to go before the examining board." Rotating between optimism and pessimism, he vowed: "I will give them examining board a trial when this frolic is over, if I am spared to get through."[148]

On June 13, the 42nd Virginia received orders to move against Gen. David Hunter in the Shenandoah Valley. The skeleton unit, with Gen. Jubal Early's Second Corps, marched to Charlottesville and boarded the Orange and Alexandria Railroad for Lynchburg. Hampered by the shortage of rolling stock, the Regiment arrived at Lynchburg five days later. There the men took a defensive position in the city to await the arrival of Early's main forces.[149]

During June 18, military engagements generally consisted of scattered skirmishing. With the arrival of reinforcements on the afternoon of the 18th, Early prepared to take the offensive the next day.[150] Yet under the cover of night Hunter withdrew his forces from Lynchburg.

Learning of the withdrawal, the 42nd Virginia immediately moved out in the general pursuit of Hunter's forces via Salem, Lexington, and Staunton. Marching nearly sixty miles during the three days, the Confederates pursued Hunter until he escaped into West Virginia.[151]

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[146] *Ibid.*

[147] John T. Bouldin to Christopher Y. Thomas, June 8, 1864, typescript in possession of Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., Blacksburg, Virginia. Hereafter cited as Thomas Papers.

[148] *Ibid.*

[149] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.

[150] Millard K. Bushong, *Old Jube: A Biography of General Jubal A. Early* (Boyce, Va., 1955) 183-91. Hereafter cited as Bushong, *Old Jube*.

[151] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.

On June 23, at the request of Gen. Lee, Early's forces moved out from Botetourt County. Early's assignment called for a movement down the Shenandoah Valley toward Washington. Hopefully this move would divert Federals from the Richmond theater and ease the pressure on Lee.[152]

Around July 5, the 42nd Virginia crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown. Four days later, the Regiment moved to Monocacy Junction, about three miles from Frederick, Md. There, the Virginians encountered Federal forces under Gen. Lew Wallace.[153]

At dawn, July 10, the 42nd Virginia left Monocacy and marched twenty miles to Rockville, on the Georgetown Pike outside Washington. The following day, the unit moved down Seventh Street Pike toward Fort Stevens, one of fifty-three forts surrounding the Federal capital. After a short struggle, the Confederates carried the Federal position at Fort Stevens. Yet Early failed to continue the advance and decided on a reconnoitering operation. With sundown came reports of Federal troops massing in front of the Confederate position. Ascertaining that his force was now too small to take the offensive, Early withdrew the next day.[154] On the evening of July 12, the 42nd Virginia recrossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks and camped near Leesburg.[155]

On July 16, the Regiment left Leesburg and advanced toward Snicker's Ferry, where it arrived two days later. There the Regiment skirmished briefly with the Federals before marching back to the Valley.[156]

In late July, the little band of survivors of the 42nd Virginia reached Kernstown, the site of their first battle. Ironically, the Confederate forces dominated military conflict that day. The 42nd Virginia simply joined in the pursuit of the routed Federals. On July 26, the Regiment moved to Martinsburg. The unit remained in the proximity of Martinsburg for two weeks before moving to Fisher's Hill.[157]

Near August 15, the 42nd Virginia left Fisher's Hill area and assisted in driving the Federals from Kernstown. From there the Regiment proceeded to Charlestown. During the August 19-September 15 period, the 42nd Virginia engaged in a number of daily skirmishes with Federal cavalry. On September 15, the 42nd Virginia moved to Shepherdstown and repulsed an enemy force there. Subsequently, the Virginians returned to camp at Bunker Hill.[158]

At 10 A.M. on September 19, the Regiment reached Winchester in time to battle the forces of Gen. Philip Sheridan. Attempting to

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[152] Bushong, *Old Jube*, 192-93.
[153] Co. 1 muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.
[154] Bushong, *Old Jube*, 204-08.
[155] Co. 1 muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.
[156] *Ibid.*
[157] *Ibid.*
[158] *Ibid.*

outmaneuver the Federals, the unit marched toward the Federal right and helped drive the enemy from the field. With the appearance of Gen. John C. Breckenridge and his men, a Confederate victory seemed imminent. Yet the Federal offensive on the left of Confederates proved unstoppable. The Confederates retreated safely through Winchester.[159]

At dawn, September 20, the 42nd Virginia moved again to Fisher's Hill near Strasburg.[160] From Fisher's Hill, the unit moved to Brown's Gap, where it had camped two years earlier with Jackson. On September 29, the Regiment reached Waynesboro and continued down the Valley. Meanwhile, Sheridan's Federals had massed at Cedar Creek, just north of Strasburg.[161]

On the evening of October 18, the 42nd Virginia left the vicinity of Strasburg and marched around the base of Three Top Mountain. Crossing the Shenandoah, the unit took position at the rear of Gen. George Crook's bluecoats. During the early morning hours of October 19, the 42nd Virginia, concealed by fog, crept toward Crook's left flank. The Confederate attack was a complete surprise. Federals broke across the field toward Belle Grove. First appearances indicated a complete Confederate victory. Yet Early had left himself exposed to cavalry on his left. It was at Early's left that Sheridan launched his attack that afternoon. Early tried desperately to rally his men, but they would not listen and continued their flight. The conflict at Cedar Creek ended Early's Valley Campaign.[162]

After the engagement at Cedar Creek, the 42nd Virginia moved to New Market. There Early tried to remold his bedraggled forces. The inevitable decline in morale, and the realization of Federal victories in other military sectors, soon brought the 42nd Virginia to contemplate life back in the home counties. One such veteran, Pvt. William A. Richardson, wrote home to request the mail route from Irisburg to Clarks Shop in Henry County. The applicant appeared ready to pay "five hundred dollars" for such appointment. Richardson implored his addressee not to "delay any time about the matter and if you can, let me know as soon as possible."[163]

Not hearing a reply for over three weeks, Richardson wrote again and practically demanded that Christopher Thomas "use all your exertions to get the contract for me and I will pay you any sum reasonable for your trouble." Closing the letter somewhat bluntly, Richardson stated: "You will please attend to the matter immediately."[164]

The 42nd Virginia left New Market on November 10 and advanced toward Middletown. Yet on November 14 the Regiment moved back up the Valley to New Market and boarded the trains for

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[159] Bushong, *Old Jube*, 236-37.
[160] *O.R.*, XLVI, pt. 1, 589, 1303.
[161] Co. I muster roll, 42nd Va. Regt., Library of Congress.
[162] Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, III, 605-06.
[163] William Richardson to Christopher Y. Thomas, Oct. 28, 1864, Thomas Papers.
[164] Ibid., Nov. 17, 1864.

Richmond. At dusk, the 42nd Virginia arrived at Petersburg where the Virginians relieved the troops entrenched near Boisseau's. The 42nd Virginia subsequently constructed winter quarters at Hatcher's Run in the defensive perimeter surrounding Richmond.[165]

The year 1864 was truly memorable for the Virginians. Despite tremendous losses at Spotsylvania, the Regiment aided in temporarily driving the Federals from the Valley. During their advance, the foot-sore veterans of over 1,600 miles of marching even reached the national capital.[166] The 42nd Virginia's efforts aided Early in diverting Grant's attention from the Richmond seige—at least for a period.

On February 6, 1865, the Regiment skirmished with Federals at Hatcher's Run area. Nearly six weeks later, March 25, the 42nd Virginia undertook an assault on Fort Stedman. At dawn, the unit surged forward and aided in the carrying of the Federal breastworks. Due to the failure of Gordon's guides, the Confederates broke before a raking fire.[167]

Following the conflicts at Fort Stedman and Five Forks, Gordon's greatly depleted forces withdrew from Petersburg and headed westward. On April 9, the 42nd Virginia were stationed outside Appomattox Court House when news came of Lee's capitulation. On the day of surrender, the 42nd Regiment had only 13 men armed and in line of battle—as compared to an original strength of 820. Of this 13, five were members of Co. I. It is interesting to note that during the war, the 42nd Virginia marched over 3,300 miles; yet the surviving members of the Regiment surrendered within a day's march of their homes.[168]

In the weeks following Appomattox, the remnants of this once-proud force returned to their mountain homes. Some veterans were missing limbs or permanently scarred. Officers such as John E. Penn would live with but one leg. Others, such as Andrew Jackson Deyerle, would walk with a permanent limp. Corporal Moses Hendricks of Co. I returned home with the loss of all teeth on one side of his jaw and all fingers missing on his left hand. Many Virginians captured at Spotsylvania never saw the Old Dominion again. These unfortunates were victims of Federal prisons at Elmira, Point Lookout, Johnson's Island and Morris Island.

For all survivors of the 42nd Virginia, there would be memories of both conflict and camp life. Many a night spent on a porch or around a kitchen table renewed tales of regimental glory in Jackson's Valley Campaign, Second Manassas, Chancellorsville, and Early's Valley Campaign.

Casting indelible impressions on the psyche of the veterans were the recollections of regimental commanders who led them in battle.

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[165] O.R., XLII, pt. 3, 889.
[166] Worsham, *Foot Cavalry*, 180.
[167] John B. Gordon, *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York, 1905), 411.
[168] Wright, "History", 1.

Colonel Jesse S. Burks, who commanded at Kernstown; William Martin, commanding in the last battles of Jackson's Valley Campaign; and Lt. Col. Robert W. Withers, dodging Federal bullets at Mine Run—these three men survived the war. In 1862, Burks returned to Bedford County and resumed farming. Martin, following the death of his bother at Malvern Hill, served as commonwealth attorney for Henry County. Robert W. Withers returned to Rustburg in Campbell County, after his release from West Buildings Hospital at Baltimore in late October, 1864. Company commanders such as Samuel J. Mullins and Andrew J. Deyerle subsequently served as delegates to the Virginia House of Delegates.

Perhaps the words of Samuel Mullins, written nearly three years before the end of the war, echoed the sentiment of the veteran of the 42nd Virginia. "Home, Sweet Home," Mullins wrote, "Oh how happy I feel to again meet my dear wife and children. Now I know how to appreciate the happiness, peace, quiet, and luxury of home. Home is now dearer than it ever was before. Yes, ten thousand times more so. I feel thankful to the kind providence that has watched over me. May I still be guided by the same hand."[169]

[169] Mullins Diary, Apr. 26, 1862.